

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USAREUR HEIDELBERG
USAFE RAMSTEIN
USCINCEUR STUTTGART

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MIL ADDEES FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJ: REOPENED TAX CONTROVERSY ONCE MORE THREAT TO COHESION OF
NRW GOVERNMENT COALITION

REF: DUSSELDORF 1383

1. OVER THE WEEKEND OF SEPTEMBER 9/10, 1978, HANS-OTTO
BAEUMER, NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIAN (NRW) LANDTAG DEPUTY
AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE LOWER RHINE DISTRICT OF THE
SPD ONCE MORE REPEATED HIS CRITICISM OF INEQUITIES
CONTAINED IN THE TAX REFORM PACKAGE OF THE FEDERAL
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GOVERNMENT. THIS CAUSED DR. HORST-LUDWIG RIEMER, NRW/FDP
LAND CHAIRMAN AND NRW MINISTER OF ECONOMICS AND TRANSPORT
TO REPEAT EVEN MORE MASSIVELY HIS EARLIER THREAT
(SEE REFTEL) THAT THE SPD CANDIDATE IN THE MINISTER
PRESIDENT ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 20, 1978
COULD NOT COUNT ON THE VOTES OF THE FDP DEPUTIES IN THE
LANDTAG. RIEMER WAS SECONDED BY HANS KOCH, CHAIRMAN OF

THE FDP LANDTAG FACTION.

2. COMMENT: IT MAY BE SAFELY ASSUMED THAT THE DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY BAEUMER WILL BE ELIMINATED AT THE SPECIAL NRW/SPD CONVENTION ON SEPTEMBER 17. THE SPD LABOR GROUP IN PARTICULAR IS SHARPLY OPPOSED TO BAEUMER'S POSITION. THE FDP SEIZED THE WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE ONCE MORE PRIOR TO THE LANDTAG ELECTIONS IN HESSE (OCTOBER 9) AND BAVARIA (OCTOBER 15) ITS INDEPENDENCE AND DETERMINATION TO DEFEND LIBERAL POSITIONS. HOWEVER, A BREAK-UP OF THE NRW COALITION PRIOR TO THESE ELECTIONS WOULD HAVE ALMOST FATAL ELECTION RESULTS FOR THE FDP IN THESE AREAS AND EVENTUALLY ELSEWHERE. THE NRW/SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD IS PREPARING A RESOLUTION FOR THE SPECIAL CONVENTION DESIGNED TO REMOVE THE OBSTACLE TO A CONTINUING COALITION. THERE HAS BEEN SOME TALK THAT MINISTER PRESIDENT HEINZ KUEHN (SPD) MIGHT STAY IN OFFICE TO AVOID A SITUATION, AS IN LOWER SAXONY, WHERE THE ELECTION OF A NEW MINISTER PRESIDENT LED TO A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT FROM THE SPD TO THE CDU. HOWEVER, KUEHN HAS NOT YET RECOVERED FROM AN APPENDECTOMY WHICH HE UNDERWENT ABOUT SIX WEEKS AGO; HE REMAINS CONFINED TO A SANATORIUM IN BAD NEUENAH.R.DUX

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